

Act, which expired at the end of last year. We have a number of bipartisan proposals that will make it easier and simpler for students to attend college and for administrators to operate our 6,000 colleges and universities.

But, another priority of the committee is legislation dealing with the mental health crisis in America, which we are discussing today.

The committee has done a great deal of work on this subject. On September 30, 2015, this committee passed S. 1893, Mental Health Awareness and Improvement Act of 2015, introduced by Senator Murray and myself. This bill, cosponsored by many members of the committee, reauthorizes and improves programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services related to awareness, prevention, and early identification of mental health conditions. The Senate passed this important piece of legislation on December 18, 2015. Senators Cassidy and Murphy have introduced legislation, and Sen. Murray and I have been working with them. We hope to move promptly to bring recommendations before the full committee.

Not everything the Senate may want to do is within the jurisdiction of this committee. We're working with Sen. Blunt, who is the chairman of the Senate's health appropriations subcommittee, on ideas that he's proposed—as well as with Sen. Cornyn on issues that the Judiciary Committee is considering and the Senate Finance Committee, which will also be involved.

Here is why there is such interest in the United States Senate in the mental health crisis in America today: A 2014 national survey from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration found that about one in five adults had a mental health condition in the past year, and 9.8 million adults had serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or depression that interferes with a major life activity.

However, nearly 60 percent of adults with mental illness did not receive mental health services in 2014. Only about half of adolescents with a mental health condition received treatment for their mental health condition.

Mental health conditions that remain untreated can lead to dropping out of school, substance abuse, incarceration, unemployment, homelessness, and suicide. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, and 90 percent of those who die by suicide have an underlying mental illness.

I hear from many Tennesseans about the challenges faced by individuals and families living with mental illness. From 2010 to 2012, nearly 21 percent of adults in Tennessee reported having a mental illness—that's more than a million people—according to the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. About 4 percent had a serious mental illness—that's nearly a quarter of a million Tennesseans.

According to a 2015 report from the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, the most recent data available shows Tennessee's rate of suicide reached its highest level in 5 years in 2013. Also in 2013, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that suicide was the second leading cause of death for Tennesseans between the ages of 15 and 34. Scott Ridgway, head of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, last year stated that suicide "remains a major public health threat in the state of Tennessee."

At our October hearing on mental health, this committee heard from administration witnesses about what the federal government is already doing to address mental illness. Today, I look forward to hearing from the doctors, nurses, advocates and administra-

tors who work every day with Americans who struggle with a mental health condition about how the federal government can help patients, health care providers, communities, and states to better address mental health issues.

One way is to ensure that the latest and most innovative research findings get translated into practice and can change the lives of individuals and families across the United States. For example, at our earlier hearing, the National Institute of Mental Health's then-director, Dr. Tom Insel, discussed the Recovery After an Initial Schizophrenia Episode, or RAISE study. The study found that identifying and treating psychosis early with a comprehensive, personalized treatment plan can significantly improve an individual's quality of life. Many states have begun implementing treatment programs based on this model—and it was called a "game changer" by the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

I am interested to hear from our witnesses how the federal government can support state efforts to implement innovative and evidence-based treatment programs—as well as their thoughts to help ensure that Washington is not getting in the way.

Strengthening our mental health care system will require modernizing the leading agency for mental health. It will also require involvement from patients, families, communities, health care providers, health departments, law enforcement, state partners, and others.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses here today about the challenges we face and the solutions they believe are needed to address them head on.

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF WELD, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Town of Weld, ME. Known today as a gateway to the rugged and beautiful Western Maine Mountains, Weld was built with a spirit of determination and resiliency that still guides the community today.

Weld's incorporation on February 8, 1816, was but one milestone on a long journey of progress. For thousands of years, Maine's Western Mountains were the hunting grounds of the Abenaki Tribe. The reverence the Abenaki had for the natural beauty and resources of the region is upheld by the people of Weld today.

The early settlers at what was called Webb's Pond Plantation were drawn by fertile soil, vast forests, and fast-moving waters, which they turned into productive farms and busy mills. The wealth produced by the land and by hard work and determination was invested in schools and churches to create a true community.

Weld is a town of patriots. Its namesake, Benjamin Weld, was a hero of the American Revolution. Ninety-three townsmen answered freedom's call during the Civil War; more than 20 gave their lives preserving our great Nation. The veterans memorials at the town library stand in silent tribute to those who have defended America throughout our history.

Weld also is a town of involved citizens. The active historical society, vol-

unteer fire department, and library are evidence of a strong community spirit. The planning and volunteerism that have gone into this yearlong bicentennial celebration are evidence that Weld's spirit grows only stronger.

This 200th anniversary is not just about something that is measured in calendar years; it is about human accomplishment and an occasion to celebrate the people who for more than two centuries have worked together and cared for one another. Thanks to those who came before, Weld has a wonderful history. Thanks to those who are there today, it has a bright future.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ALEXIS RUDD

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Dr. Alexis Rudd, a Knauss Sea Grant Fellow on the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and other members of the committee over the past year.

Dr. Rudd received her Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Hawaii. In her postgraduate work, she has used her scientific expertise to inform public policy.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Dr. Rudd for all of the fine work she has done. I wish her continued success in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD D. SPIEGELMAN

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Richard D. Spiegelman. In a world of shifting alliances and temporary commitments, you occasionally come to know someone who epitomizes constancy, loyalty and devotion to the public good. And if you are very lucky, you get to work with him or her. I have had the good fortune of working with such a person, my former legislative director and counsel, Dick Spiegelman. For 8 years, Dick brought to my Senate office a piercing intellect, an intense work ethic, an unfailing good nature, and a vast collection of colorful bowties.

I first came to know Dick when he worked for my father, Governor Casey, as Pennsylvania's general counsel, the highest ranking attorney in a Governor's administration. He had sterling academic credentials: an undergraduate degree from Williams College, as well as a master's degree and a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania. More importantly, he brought a wealth of experience in both the private and public sectors to the job. Following 8 years of service in Governor Casey's administration, Dick returned to private practice as a partner in the Dilworth Paxson law firm, representing a blue-chip clientele of major telecommunications companies. After I was elected Pennsylvania auditor general in 1996, my transition leaders broached the idea of luring Dick back